

KARO-ECHO Membership Meeting

December 9, 2019
Arlington Clubhouse

Attendees

KJ6AAT	David Swanson
KE6BEE	Howdy Goudey
KN6BVF	David Naisuler
KN6CMP	Blake Yeaman
KN6CMR	Susan Yeaman
KK6GIO	Larry Vanselow
KM6HFT	Curt Smith
K6KOP	Jerry Michaels
KK6NDF	Hal Graboske
KC6OBK	Marian Gade
KK6PPR	Davis Todhunter
KK6RED	Diane Richwine
KJ6SWK	Annette McCoubrey
KM6UCF	Natalie DeJarlais
KJ6WSS	Jay Fenton
AC6ZF	Zenon Fortuna
KK6ZPM	Karen Leong Fenton

Marian Gade moved to approve the November meeting minutes; Jay Fenton seconded; motion carried.

Outreach & Recruiting

We have a number of outreach efforts going on, and we need to get more organized to do more followup, including elmering for the newbies and more sophisticated activities for more experienced hams.

Annette will work with Rob soon to coordinate efforts. There is a brochure that needs to be updated. Information management is the main issue now; we need to keep track of what we've done. Much is happening, and we need to centralize the information.

We need to think about whom we need to recruit, and recognize that different groups have different expectations.

- Existing hams - we recently sent out letters and got three responses. From this group, we're hoping for technical expertise.
- New hams - They need to know what to do next. FCC website is good for gathering these names.
- CERT graduates - CERT should be more involved with us, but they're not well organized in the area. This is the biggest challenge we face. Chris Hilliard and Chief Grupalo have gone through years of CERT paper records. Of the 700 graduates, 129 indicated interest in radio. These are rich targets.

So far, we've done well with outreach, but now we need to follow up.

David Swanson mentioned that it's important to talk to people individually to recommend

equipment. Their locations matter, and they can get easily discouraged. Advice could be tailored by neighborhood.

Diane Richwine mentioned that we also need to learn to set up incident command posts. There was also discussion of printing additional brochures, as we are running low.

Training & Operations

Simple training programs can help a lot. Berkeley CERT hands out FRS radios (or at least used to).

Karen Leong Fenton thinks we could sponsor post-CERT trainings under our name and develop a KARO-ECHO curriculum, starting with GMRS. Berkeley has their own system, and Richmond is focusing on it as well.

Karen pointed out that one can do a lot with GMRS at this point, as it's similar to a basic ham basic radio. GMRS serves as net control for FRS. FRS and GMRS channels are the same, and can interfere in a real emergency. There are thousands of short-range radios in the area.

Equipment & Infrastructure

KARO-ECHO has recovered and repaired a lot of forgotten equipment in the last year.

Howdy Goudey has led much of this effort.

Go-Kart: Still at Don's home. Davis has created a place for it near an outlet, and it has a battery-backup garage door opener. **Davis is ready to receive the Go-Kart** and show relevant people the code. He's at 600 feet.

A GMRS antenna will be installed at Harding clubhouse, alongside the existing ham antenna. Howdy is waiting until the city renews our co-sponsorship agreement to proceed. In general we'll try to install both ham and GMRS antennas with patch connections in exterior lockboxes. The next location to pursue will be Cerrito Vista Park.

KARO-ECHO Annual Report

Howdy created an annual report so that we can maintain our co-sponsorship agreement with the city. This allows us to continue to use city facilities. The new city clerk is adhering to the annual renewals. Renewal decision will likely be announced in January 2020. The KARO-ECHO 2019 Annual Report will be on the website. Marian requested that it also be submitted to Kensington KPPCSD (Kensington Police Protection and Community Service District) and KFPD.

Organizational & Funding Updates

Election

The nominating committee put forth the following slate, noting that nobody has offered to serve as vice-president.

- President: Hal Graboske
- Vice President: [open]
- Treasurer: Larry Vanselow
- Secretary: Natalie DeJarlais

Marian moved that the slate presented by the nominating committee be approved for one year terms for the jobs for which they were nominated. Susan Yeaman seconded the motion, which was carried.

Establishment of Standing Working Groups

The board has established four standing working groups, which will be represented at board meetings. These four SWGs have a good level of leadership, and **club members should consider volunteering in at least one of these areas.**

- Outreach & Recruiting (Annette McCoubrey)
- Training and Operations (Howdy Goudey, Don Simon)
- Equipment and Infrastructure (Howdy Goudey, Don Simon)
- Web & Data Management (Rob McNicholas)

Funding

Hal would like to make fundraising a focus in 2020. People are making personal donations, but we need a game plan, including grant research. **Natalie, Larry, and Hal will get together to discuss next steps.**

Hal mentioned that garden parties and garage sales have raised money in Kensington. Also, once people have donated, they remain more interested. We can also go to El Cerrito groups to talk about successes in Kensington and see what we can do.

Davis suggested focusing on FEMA, and the police and fire departments, as they are the ones who should be interested. We could also look at PG&E. The Diablo Fire Council has given money for tree cleanup; perhaps radio communications could be considered to be a mitigation of hazards.

David Naisuler offered to make branded BaoFeng holders that could be sold for \$20 each as a fundraiser.

Training

Howdy and Hal provided a recap of the LUTB (Light Up the Bay) exercise in November. LUTB is a group of professionals, all volunteers, including senior people in large organizations. 8 Cs (countywide CERT umbrella organization). We participated because Don got us involved.

EC CERT didn't formally participate. Diane and David brought LUTB to Richmond and did a great job. Karen and Jay also volunteered. There were 80-90 participants, including 18 people in El Cerrito/Kensington. The exercise demonstrated communications from neighborhood CERT to ICP to EOC to the county.

Howdy was NET control between ICPs and David at the EOC and did a fantastic job. There is a recording of the transmissions, which they played for the county drill leaders, who were impressed. Howdy can send the recording to anyone who is interested.

More photo/video/audio documentation of the exercise would have been helpful..

David was his own scribe at the EOC, which was a big job and he was very busy, because all messages were directed to the EOC. Diane read a report for the planning team. It was perhaps the largest event ever held in the state, with 346 participants, without all cities

reporting in. There were 91 in Richmond, 130 in Walnut Creek, and even more in LaMorinda. The planning team is continuing to meet, and 12/19 is the next meeting. They'll be doing mini-drills.

The City of Richmond did not participate.

Howdy operated the ICP/ECO net control from the hill near the 4C's repeated at the south end of Wildcat Park. He assigned tactical call signs based on neighborhood name. A 2 meter simplex freq. was used. The Richmond radio room also has 1.25m and 70cm radios that could have allowed multiple simultaneous EOC operators if additional operators were available. Ten neighborhoods were recruited by going to meetings, such as the Point Richmond CERT meeting, the graduating CERT class; and a neighborhood meeting. They also published an article in the CERT newsletter and included the event on EventBrite. Volunteers were recruited for specific roles and were trained. Most training needed was in messaging and how to track it. All the cities had problems with the 213 message handling form, so they plan to have classes in messaging, how to be net control, setting up ICP, how to be an incident commander, scribe training, etc.

Richmond "nailed it" because so many people volunteered and helped out. They want to keep having these drills. One person requested all the paper that was generated. It will take months to go through it, and he has promised to debrief folks once that's done.

Jerry operated a simulated EOC for the smaller Kensington portion of the drill. He sent 3 or 4 messages to the EOC using linked repeaters after determining that 80m was too marginal to pass messages to Martinez. Digital messaging was also used to pass messages from the various city EOCs to the County coming in as well. The county EOC produced its own after action report.

The next LUTB drill will be in November 2020, but they'll do mini-drills in the meantime. A rep from the state OES office came to observe and was impressed. No city observers, though. David mentioned that it would be good to get more media coverage on these activities.

One lesson from LUTB is that the EOC needs to be well staffed. Hal mentioned that people were very busy, and this was only a drill; it would be much more chaotic in a real event. The scribe is the busiest person of all, and backup scribes are needed.

Another lesson: They were outdoors at tables, and 36 hours later it was raining hard. You need weather and wind protection.

The GMRS/FRS net control was good, but he was overwhelmed. It's essential to move people off the primary channel, because lots of random questions come through.

Message handling issues: Followup on existing issues, and connecting related messages that are distant in time. It's unclear how to do this effectively. David mentioned that they have been working on some scribe protocols.

They used a variety of GMRS models during the drill, and they all work differently. New Midlands were almost as good at the BTechs. They did mapping, and a large area was able to talk via FRS. **Howdy and others will explore setting up training programs that can be scaled down to the neighborhood level.**

David Naisuler has an idea about creating big maps where incidents can be flagged so that subsequent operators/scribes can refer back. Hal suggested asking Rob to provide maps for this.

Call sign issue: Hal got calls from people using tactical call signs and didn't know who they were. Howdy mentioned that when people are given tactical call signs, they seem to "forget" about their FCC callsign. Besides being a FCC rule, when operators rotate use of FCC call will announce the change of operators at a particular location under the same tactical call. Operator changes at a tactical location should be reported to net control. When changing frequency to pass a message, you also need to state your FCC callsign at least once even if you did it recently on another freq.

We also need to remember to announce that it's a drill, which should happen just before and after each message.

Planning issue: Karen would like us to block the schedule of when the trainings/meetings will occur in 2020. Mini trainings and practice would be good.

Meeting adjourned.